

VALENTI LAW APC

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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

RAUL URIARTE-LIMON,

Plaintiff,

vs.

LBSW LLC, a Delaware limited liability
company; BJ SOFT INC, a California
corporation; GLOBAL TRUCK/AUTO
STARTER & ALTERNATOR, LLC;
and DOES 1-10,

Defendants.

Case No.:

COMPLAINT FOR:

DENIAL OF CIVIL RIGHTS AND
ACCESS TO PUBLIC FACILITIES
TO PHYSICALLY DISABLED
PERSONS IN VIOLATION OF THE
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES
ACT OF 1990, (42 U.S.C. §12101, *et*
seq.) AND THE UNRUH CIVIL
RIGHTS ACT, (CALIFORNIA CIVIL
CODE §51, *et seq.*)

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

1 amend when the true names, capacities, connections, and responsibilities of the
2 Defendants and Does 1 through 10, inclusive, are ascertained.

3 4. Defendants own and owned the property located at 59 S Milliken
4 Avenue, Suite 101, Ontario, CA 91764 and 59 S Milliken Avenue, Suite 108,
5 (“Subject Property”) at all relevant times.

6 5. Defendants operate and operated a restaurant doing business as JJ
7 Grill (“restaurant”), located at 59 S Milliken Avenue, Suite 101, Ontario, CA
8 91764, at all relevant times.

9 6. Defendants operate and operated an automotive parts store doing
10 business as Global Truck Auto Star (“automotive parts store”), located at 59 S
11 Milliken Avenue, Suite 108, Ontario, CA 91764, at all relevant times

12 7. Plaintiff alleges that the Defendants have been and are the owners,
13 franchisees, lessees, general partners, limited partners, agents, trustees, employees,
14 subsidiaries, partner companies and/or joint ventures of each of the other
15 Defendants, and performed all acts and omissions stated herein within the course
16 and scope of such relationships causing the damages complained of herein.

17 **II. JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

18 8. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to
19 28 U.S.C. §1331 and §1343(a)(3) and (a)(4) for violations of the Americans with
20 Disabilities Act of 1990, U.S.C. §12101, *et seq.*

21 9. Pursuant to supplemental jurisdiction, an attendant and related cause
22 of action, arising out of the same nucleus of operative facts and arising out of the
23 same transactions, is also brought under California’s Unruh Civil Rights Act,
24 which expressly incorporates the Americans with Disabilities Act.

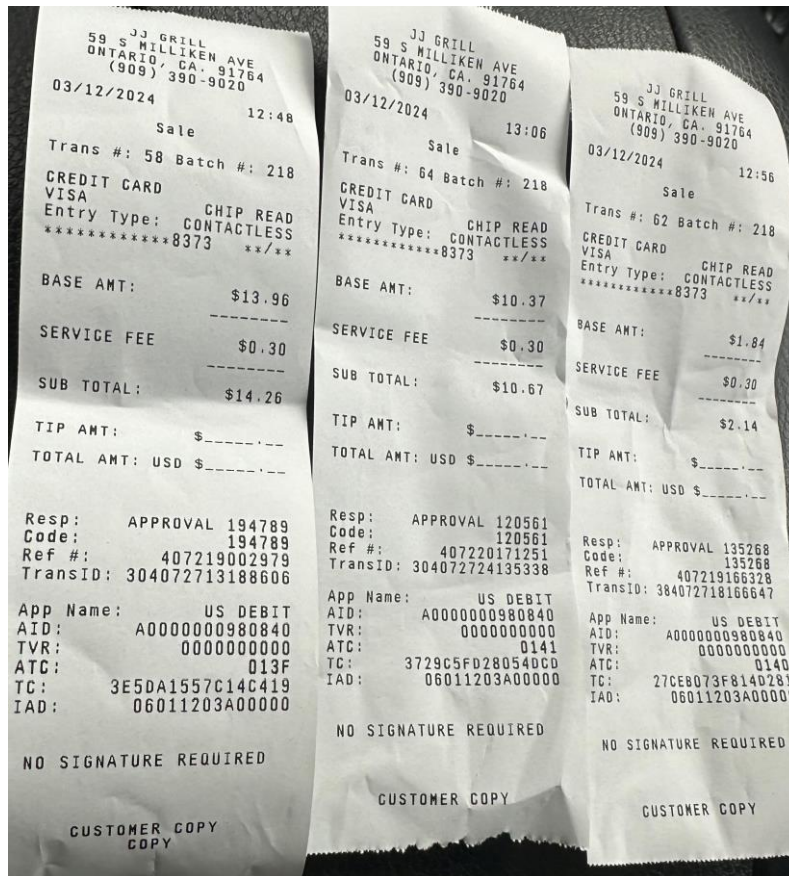
25 10. Venue is proper in this court pursuant to 28 U.S.C. U.S.C. §1391(b)
26 and is founded on the fact that the real property which is the subject of this action
27 is located in this district and that Plaintiff’s causes of action arose in this district.
28

III. FACTS

11. Plaintiff uses a wheelchair for mobility.

12. Defendants' business is open to the public, a place of public accommodation, and a business establishment.

13. Plaintiff went to the restaurant on March 12, 2024, and purchased a meal. The receipts he received for his purchases are shown in the photo below.



14. Plaintiff went to the automotive parts store on March 13, 2024, and purchased a tool for his automobile. The receipt he received for his purchase is shown in the photo below.



15. Unfortunately, during Plaintiff's visits, Defendants did not offer persons with disabilities equivalent facilities, privileges, advantages, and accommodations offered to other persons.

16. Plaintiff encountered barriers that interfered with and denied Plaintiff the ability to use and enjoy the goods, services, privileges, advantages, and accommodations offered by Defendants at the Subject Property.

17. These barriers violate one or more standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act ("2010 ADA") and/or the California Building Codes ("2022 CBC").

18. Parking for patrons visiting the Subject Property is among the facilities, privileges, advantages, and accommodations offered by Defendants.

19. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, "a public accommodation's first priority should be to enable individuals with disabilities to physically enter its facility. This priority on 'getting through the door' recognizes that providing physical access to a facility from public sidewalks, public

1 transportation, or parking is generally preferable to any alternative arrangements in
2 terms of both business efficiency and the dignity of individuals with disabilities.”
3 ADA Title III Technical Assistance Manual §III-4.4500.

4 20. When parking is provided, there must be at least one accessible
5 parking space designated and marked for disabled persons. Where more than one
6 parking facility is provided on a site, the number of accessible spaces provided on
7 the site shall be calculated according to the number of spaces required for each
8 parking facility. 2010 ADA §502 et seq.; 2010 ADA §208.2; 2022 CBC 11B-502
9 et seq; 2022 CBC 11B-208.2.

10 21. However, there is no accessible parking whatsoever for disabled
11 persons at the restaurant.

12 22. There is no ADA compliant parking. ADA 2010 §502 et seq.; 2022
13 CBC 11B 502 et seq.

14 23. There is no ADA compliant parking signage. ADA 2010 §502.6; 2022
15 CBC 11B-502.6, 11B-703.7.2.1.

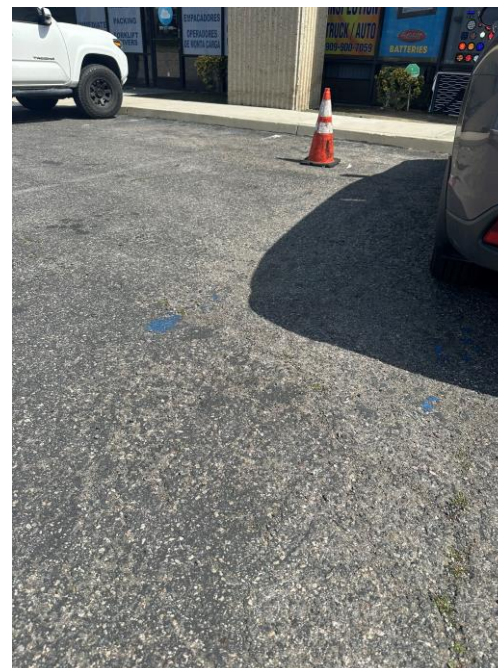
16 24. The ground surface of the asphalt by the curb cut in front of the
17 restaurant was severely cracked, broken and uneven. ADA 2010 §302; 2022 CBC
18 11B-302; 28 C.F.R. §36.211(a); 2022 CBC 11B-108.

19 25. It appears there was once a designated accessible parking space and
20 adjacent access aisle in front of the automotive parts store, but the paint is now
21 extremely faded and cannot be clearly seen and/or seen at all. There is no way to
22 determine the actual dimensions of the space and whether the adjacent loading and
23 unloading access aisle is the correct width for an accessible space. The
24 International Access Symbol was so faded and worn it cannot be clearly identified.
25 ADA 2010 §502.3.3; ADA 2010 §502.6; 2022 CBC 11B-502.3.3; 2022 CBC 11B
26 502.6; 28 C.F.R. §36.211(a); 2022 CBC 11B-108.

1 26. The ostensibly designated accessible parking space's adjacent access
2 aisle did not say "No Parking" or the paint is so faded it cannot be read. ADA 2010
3 §502.3.3; 2022 CBC 11B-502.3.3; 11B-108.

4 27. There is no ADA compliant parking signage. ADA 2010 §502.6; 2022
5 CBC 11B-502.6, 2022 CBC 11B-703.7.2.1.

6 28. The photos below show one or more of these violations.



1 29. The barriers existed during Plaintiff's visit to the Subject Property.
2 Plaintiff personally encountered these barriers.

3 30. These inaccessible conditions and barriers denied Plaintiff full and
4 equal access and caused him difficulty, discomfort, and embarrassment. Because of
5 the lack of compliant parking, Plaintiff was placed at risk of being blocked in by
6 other vehicles and unable to get out of his vehicle or get back into it. He was also
7 at greater risk of being hit by a car while transferring to and from his wheelchair.

8 31. These barriers denied Plaintiff full and equal access due to his
9 disability because, *inter alia*, they caused Plaintiff anxiety, difficulty, discomfort,
10 and embarrassment which patrons who do not use a wheelchair for mobility do not
11 suffer when they access the Subject Property.

12 32. Plaintiff intends to return to the Subject Property in the near future.
13 Plaintiff is currently deterred from returning because of the knowledge of the
14 barriers to equal access that relate to Plaintiff's disabilities which continue to exist
15 at Defendants' public accommodation facilities. Plaintiff is proud to be an ADA
16 tester who engages in the "necessary and desirable" task of bringing serial lawsuits
17 in order to ensure that the accessibility standards of Title III of the ADA are
18 enforced. (The Ninth Circuit has repeatedly commented that "it may be necessary
19 and desirable for committed individuals to bring serial litigation advancing the
20 time when public accommodations will be compliant with the ADA. . . .[A] system
21 that relies on private attorneys general should respect and value the work done by
22 those who take up the mantle . . . rather than expecting every disabled person to
23 use whatever spare time and energy they have to litigate each trip to the movies."
24 *Langer v. Kiser*, 57 F.4th 1085, 1095, 1099 (9th Cir. 2023) (citations omitted)).

25 33. Though Plaintiff has filed numerous cases, the total number of
26 businesses he has sued represents a very small fraction of the approximately 3
27 million public accommodations in the State of California alone which are required
28 to be accessible to disabled people pursuant to ADA and CBC standards.

1 34. As a tester, Plaintiff visits properties in part to identify potential ADA
2 and CBC violations, and revisits the properties to confirm ADA and CBC
3 compliance after any lawsuit he brings regarding the violations is resolved. He
4 therefore has a credible intent to return to the Subject Property in the near future in
5 order to accomplish this task, and in the meantime is also currently deterred from
6 returning because of the knowledge of the barriers to equal access that relate to his
7 disabilities which continue to exist at the Subject Property. This accords with well-
8 settled Ninth Circuit precedent which provides that a Title III ADA tester such as
9 Plaintiff has Article III standing because “visiting a property to identify potential
10 ADA violations is consistent with having a credible intent to return.” See, e.g.,
11 *Langer v. Kiser*, at 1096 (citations omitted); See also, *Civil Rights Education and*
12 *Enforcement Center v. Hospitality Properties Trust* (“CREEC”), 867 F.3d 1093
13 (9th Cir. 2017).

14 35. Plaintiff also has Article III standing because, in addition to visiting
15 the Subject Property to test for ADA and CBC violations, he also visited to
16 purchase a meal at JJ Grill and purchase a tool for his car at Global Truck Auto
17 Star. The Subject Property is conveniently located and in the general area where he
18 lives, shops, goes to medical appointments, visits family and friends, recreates, and
19 does other normal activities in his daily life. Therefore, in addition to his concrete
20 plan to return to the Subject Property to test for ADA and CBC compliance,
21 Plaintiff also intends to return to the Subject Property in the near future to purchase
22 a meal, and shop for auto parts or supplies after the accessibility barriers alleged
23 herein have been removed.

24 36. Plaintiff alleges that Defendants knew that the barriers prevented
25 equal access. Plaintiff further alleges that Defendants had actual or constructive
26 knowledge that the architectural barriers prevented equal access, and that the
27 noncompliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Title 24 of the
28 California Building Code regarding accessible features was intentional.

1 37. Defendants have obstructed or failed to maintain, in working and
2 useable conditions, those features necessary to provide ready access to persons
3 with disabilities. “A public accommodation shall maintain in operable working
4 condition those features of facilities and equipment that are required to be readily
5 accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities.” 28 C.F.R. §36.211(a); 2022
6 CBC 11B-108.

7 38. The State of California Department of General Servicers, Division of
8 the State Architect (DSA) provides commentary to 2022 CBC 11B-108 as follows:

9 Features for accessibility must be permanently functional, unobstructed
10 and may not be removed. It is not sufficient to provide features such as
11 accessible routes, parking, elevators, ramps or signage if those features
12 are not maintained in a manner that enables individuals with disabilities
13 to use them.

14 DSA, 2019 California Access Compliance Advisory Reference Manual, p.84.

15 39. Defendants have the financial resources to remove these barriers
16 without much expense or difficulty in order to make their property more accessible
17 to their mobility impaired customers. The United States Department of Justice has
18 identified that these types of barriers are readily achievable to remove.

19 40. To date, Defendants refuse to remove these barriers, in violation of
20 the law, willfully depriving disabled persons including Plaintiff of important civil
21 rights.

22 41. On information and belief, Plaintiff alleges that the Defendants’
23 failure to remove these barriers was intentional because the barriers are logical and
24 obvious. During all relevant times Defendants had authority, control, and dominion
25 over these conditions and therefore the absence of accessible facilities was not a
26 mishap, but rather an intentional act.

27 42. The barriers to access are listed above without prejudice to Plaintiff
28 citing additional barriers to equal access by an amended complaint after inspection
by Plaintiff’s Certified Access Specialist (CAsp). *Oliver v. Ralphs Grocery Co.*,

654 F.3d 903 (9th Cir. 2011); *Doran v. 7-Eleven, Inc.*, 524 F.3d 1034 (9th Cir. 2008); *Chapman v. Pier One Imports (USA), Inc.*, 631 F.3d 939 (9th Cir. 2011). All of these barriers to access render the premises inaccessible to physically disabled persons who are mobility impaired, such as Plaintiff, are barriers Plaintiff may encounter when he returns to the premises. All public accommodations must be brought into compliance with all applicable federal and state accessibility requirements.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

Violation of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990

(42 U.S.C. §12101, *et seq.*)

(Against All Defendants)

43. Plaintiff alleges and incorporates by reference, as if fully set forth again herein, each and every allegation contained in all prior paragraphs of this complaint.

44. More than thirty years ago, the 101st United States Congress found that although “physical or mental disabilities in no way diminish a person’s right to fully participate in all aspects of society, yet many people with physical or mental disabilities have been precluded from doing so because of discrimination...in such critical areas as employment, housing, public accommodations, education, transportation, communication, recreation, institutionalization, health services, voting, and access to public services.” 42 U.S.C. §12101(a).

45. In 1990 Congress also found that “the Nation’s proper goals regarding individuals with disabilities are to assure equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for such individuals,” but that “the continuing existence of unfair and unnecessary discrimination and prejudice denies people with disabilities the opportunity to compete on an equal basis and to pursue those opportunities for which our free society is justifiably famous.” 42 U.S.C. §12101(a).

1 46. In passing the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which was
2 signed into law by President George H. W. Bush on July 26, 1990 (hereinafter the
3 “ADA”), Congress stated as its purpose:

4 “It is the purpose of this Act

5 (1) to provide a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the
6 elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities;

7 (2) to provide clear, strong, consistent, enforceable standards
8 addressing discrimination against individuals with disabilities;

9 (3) to ensure that the Federal Government plays a central role in
10 enforcing the standards established in this Act on behalf of individuals
11 with disabilities; and

12 (4) to invoke the sweep of congressional authority, including the power
13 to enforce the fourteenth amendment and to regulate commerce, in
14 order to address the major areas of discrimination faced day to-day by
15 people with disabilities.”

42 USC §12101(b).

16 47. As part of the ADA, Congress passed “Title III – Public
17 Accommodations and Services Operated by Private Entities” (42 U.S.C. §12181 *et*
18 *seq.*). Title III of the ADA prohibits discrimination against any person “on the
19 basis of disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities,
20 privileges, advantages, or accommodations of any place of public accommodation
21 by any person who owns, leases (or leases to), or operates a place of public
22 accommodation.” 42 U.S.C. §12182(a).

23 48. The specific prohibitions against discrimination include, *inter alia*, the
24 following:

- 25 • 42 U.S.C. §12182(b)(1)(A)(ii): “Participation in Unequal Benefit. - It
26 shall be discriminatory to afford an individual or class of individuals,
27 on the basis of a disability or disabilities of such individual or class,
28 directly, or through contractual, licensing, or other arrangements, with
the opportunity to participate in or benefit from a good, service, facility,

1 privilege, advantage, or accommodation that is not equal to that
2 afforded to other individuals.”

- 3 • 42 U.S.C. §12182(b)(2)(A)(ii): “a failure to make reasonable
4 modifications in policies, practices, or procedures when such
5 modifications are necessary to afford such goods, services, facilities,
6 privileges, advantages, or accommodations to individuals with
7 disabilities...;”
- 8 • 42 U.S.C. §12182(b)(2)(A)(iii): “a failure to take such steps as may be
9 necessary to ensure that no individual with a disability is excluded,
10 denied service, segregated, or otherwise treated differently than other
11 individuals because of the absence of auxiliary aids and services...;”
- 12 • 42 U.S.C. §12182(b)(2)(A)(iv): “a failure to remove architectural
13 barriers, and communication barriers that are structural in nature, in
14 existing facilities... where such removal is readily achievable;”
- 15 • 42 U.S.C. §12182(b)(2)(A)(v): “where an entity can demonstrate that
16 the removal of a barrier under clause (iv) is not readily achievable, a
17 failure to make such goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages,
18 or accommodations available through alternative methods if such
19 methods are readily achievable.”

20 49. Plaintiff is a qualified individual with a disability as defined in the
21 Rehabilitation Act and in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

22 50. The acts and omissions of Defendants set forth herein were in
23 violation of Plaintiff’s rights under the ADA and the regulations promulgated
24 thereunder, 28 C.F.R. Part 36 *et seq.*

25 51. The removal of each of the physical and policy barriers complained of
26 by Plaintiff as hereinabove alleged, were at all times herein mentioned “readily
27 achievable” under the standards of §12181 and §12182 of the ADA. Removal of
28 each and every one of the architectural and/or policy barriers complained of herein
was already required under California law. Further, on information and belief,
alterations, structural repairs or additions since January 26, 1993, have also

1 independently triggered requirements for removal of barriers to access for disabled
2 persons per §12183 of the ADA. In the event that removal of any barrier is found
3 to be “not readily achievable,” Defendants still violated the ADA, per
4 §12182(b)(2)(A)(v) by failing to provide all goods, services, privileges, advantages
5 and accommodations through alternative methods that were “readily achievable.”

6 52. On information and belief, as of the date of Plaintiff’s encounter at the
7 premises and as of the filing of this Complaint, Defendants’ actions, policies, and
8 physical premises have denied and continue to deny full and equal access to
9 Plaintiff and to other mobility disabled persons in other respects, which violate
10 Plaintiff’s right to full and equal access and which discriminate against Plaintiff on
11 the basis of his disabilities, thus wrongfully denying to Plaintiff the full and equal
12 enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages and
13 accommodations, in violation of 42 U.S.C. §12182 and §12183 of the ADA.

14 53. Defendants’ actions continue to deny Plaintiff’s rights to full and
15 equal access and discriminated and continue to discriminate against him on the
16 basis of his disabilities, thus wrongfully denying to Plaintiff the full and equal
17 enjoyment of Defendants’ goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages and
18 accommodations, in violation of the ADA, 42 U.S.C. §12182.

19 54. Further, each and every violation of the Americans With Disabilities
20 Act of 1990 also constitutes a separate and distinct violation of California Civil
21 Code §51(f), §52, §54(c) and §54.1(d), thus independently justifying an award of
22 damages and injunctive relief pursuant to California law, including but not limited
23 to Civil Code §54.3 and §55.

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1 **SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION**

2 Violation of the Unruh Civil Rights Act

3 (California Civil Code §51, *et seq.*)

4 (Against All Defendants)

5 55. Plaintiff alleges and incorporates by reference, as if fully set forth
6 again herein, each and every allegation contained in all prior paragraphs of this
7 complaint.

8 56. California Civil Code §51 provides that physically disabled persons
9 are free and equal citizens of the state, regardless of their medical condition or
10 disability:

11 All persons within the jurisdiction of this state are free and equal, and
12 no matter what their sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin,
13 **disability, or medical condition** are entitled to full and equal
14 accommodations, advantages, facilities, privileges, or services in all
business establishments of every kind whatsoever.

15 California Civil Code §51(b) (emphasis added).

16 57. California Civil Code §51.5 also states, in part: “No business,
17 establishment of any kind whatsoever shall discriminate against...any person in
18 this state on account” of their disability.

19 58. California Civil Code §51(f) specifically incorporates (by reference)
20 an individual’s rights under the ADA into the Unruh Act.

21 59. California Civil Code §52 provides that the discrimination by
22 Defendants against Plaintiff on the basis of his disability constitutes a violation of
23 the general antidiscrimination provisions of §51 and §52.

24 60. Each of Defendants’ discriminatory acts or omissions constitutes a
25 separate and distinct violation of California Civil Code §52, which provides that:

26 Whoever denies, aids or incites a denial, or makes any discrimination
27 or distinction contrary to section 51, 51.5, or 51.6 is liable for each and
28 every offense for the actual damages, and any amount that may be
determined by a jury, or a court sitting without a jury, up to a maximum

1 of three times the amount of actual damage but in no case less than four
2 thousand dollars (\$4,000), and any attorney's fees that may be
3 determined by the court in addition thereto, suffered by any person
4 denied the rights provided in Section 51, 51.5, or 51.6.

5 61. Any violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
6 constitutes a violation of California Civil Code §51(f), thus independently
7 justifying an award of damages and injunctive relief pursuant to California law,
8 including Civil Code §52. Per Civil Code §51(f), "A violation of the right of any
9 individual under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-
10 336) shall also constitute a violation of this section."

11 62. The actions and omissions of Defendants as herein alleged constitute a
12 denial of access to and use of the described public facilities by physically disabled
13 persons within the meaning of California Civil Code §51 and §52.

14 63. The discriminatory denial of equal access to and use of the described
15 public facilities caused Plaintiff difficulty, discomfort, and embarrassment.

16 64. As a proximate result of Defendants' action and omissions,
17 Defendants have discriminated against Plaintiff in violation of Civil Code §51 and
18 §52, and are responsible for statutory, compensatory and actual damages to
19 Plaintiff, according to proof.

20 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

21 Plaintiff has no adequate remedy at law to redress the wrongs suffered as set
22 forth in this Complaint. Plaintiff has suffered and will continue to suffer
23 irreparable injury as a result of the unlawful acts, omissions, policies, and
24 practices of the Defendants as alleged herein, unless Plaintiff is granted the relief
25 he requests. Plaintiff and Defendants have an actual controversy and opposing
26 legal positions as to Defendants' violations of the laws of the United States and
27 the State of California.
28

1 The need for relief is critical because the civil rights at issue are paramount
2 under the laws of the United States of America and the State of California.

3 WHEREFORE, Plaintiff prays judgment against Defendants, and each of
4 them, as follows:

5 1. Issue a preliminary and permanent injunction directing
6 Defendants as current owners, operators, lessors, and/or lessees of the
7 Subject Property and premises to modify the above described property,
8 premises, policies and related facilities to provide full and equal access
9 to all persons, including persons with physical disabilities; and issue a
10 preliminary and permanent injunction pursuant to ADA §12188(a) and
11 state law directing Defendants to provide facilities and services usable
12 by Plaintiff and similarly situated persons with disabilities, and which
13 provide full and equal access, as required by law, and to maintain such
14 accessible facilities once they are provided; to cease any discriminatory
15 policies; and to train Defendants' employees and agents how to
16 recognize disabled persons and accommodate their rights and needs;

17 2. Retain jurisdiction over the Defendants until such time as
18 the Court is satisfied that Defendants' unlawful policies, practices, acts
19 and omissions, and maintenance of physically inaccessible public
20 facilities and policies as complained of herein no longer occur, and
21 cannot recur;

22 3. Award to Plaintiff all appropriate damages, including but
23 not limited to actual and statutory damages according to proof;

24 4. Award to Plaintiff all reasonable attorney fees, litigation
25 expenses, and costs of this proceeding pursuant to 42 U.S.C §12205 and
26 California Civil Code §52; and

27 5. Grant such other and further relief as this Court may deem
28 just and proper.

1 DATED: April 3, 2024

VALENTI LAW APC

2
3 By: /s/ Matthew D. Valenti

4 Matthew D. Valenti
5 Attorney for Plaintiff
6 Raul Uriarte-Limon
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JURY DEMAND

Plaintiff hereby demands a trial by jury for all claims and issues for which a jury is permitted.

DATED: April 3, 2024

VALENTI LAW APC

By: /s/ Matthew D. Valenti

Matthew D. Valenti
Attorney for Plaintiff
Raul Uriarte-Limon